

Claims:

1. A method for designating toppings to be assembled on a pizza as well as their respective position on the pizza , the method comprising the steps of:

- providing an order entry terminal for a customer to use to specify an order for a pizza, the terminal being connected to a point-of-sale system and including a display screen, voice synthesis generator, microphone, speaker, voice recognition processor capable of detecting the customer's spoken words and microprocessor controller;
- prompting the customer to enter an order by speaking words in a human voice;
- detecting the customer's spoken words;
- displaying a photo-realistic image of a pizza according to the order specified by the customer;
- displaying a graphical user interface to permit the customer to manually alter the order;
- confirming the accuracy of the customer's order; and
- entering the customer's order into the point-of-sale system.

2. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the method further includes the step of detecting the customer's initiation of the order entry process and responding by presenting a spoken greeting to a customer in synthesized human speech.

3. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of prompting the customer to enter an order for a pizza comprises the step prompting the user to enter their order by speaking in a narrative fashion.

4. The invention according to Claim 3 wherein the step of detecting the customer's spoken words comprises the step of analyzing the customer's spoken narrative toward identifying the particular food order being placed.

5. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of prompting the customer to enter an order for a pizza comprises the step presenting a series of two or more individual prompts to the customer soliciting the user to enter an order by responding to  
5 individual prompts presented one at a time to the customer .
6. The invention according to Claim 5 wherein the step of detecting the customer's spoken words comprises the step of analyzing each of the customer's spoken responses provided in response to the individual prompts toward identifying the  
5 particular food order being placed.
7. The invention according to Claim 5 wherein the step of prompting the user comprises generating and presenting to the user words in a synthesized human voice.
8. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of detecting the customer's spoken words further includes the step of automatically identifying the language spoken by the customer toward generating further prompts to the customer in the same  
5 language spoken by the customer.
9. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the method further includes the step of providing the customer the ability to identify a preferred language to be spoken to the customer.
10. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of displaying a photo-realistic image of a pizza according to the order specified by the customer comprises the step of displaying a static image of a cooked pizza.
11. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of displaying a photo-realistic image of a pizza according to the order specified by the customer comprises the step of displaying an animation which illustrates the preparation of the pizza by the  
5 addition of each raw ingredient called for by the customer's order.

12. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the method further includes the step of displaying to the customer a user interface which includes a menu identifying various food items available for order by the customer.

13. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the order entry terminal is located within a restaurant.

14. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the order entry terminal comprises a customer's personal computer located remote to a restaurant and which is in turn connected to the point-of-sale system via an Internet connection.

15. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the order entry terminal is provided at a drive through location operated by a restaurant whereby a customer may place an order from a motor vehicle.

16. A method for designating toppings to be assembled on a pizza as well as their respective position on the pizza , the method comprising the steps of:

- 5           - providing an order entry terminal for a customer to use to specify an order for a pizza, the terminal being connected to a point-of-sale system and including a display screen, voice synthesis generator, microphone, speaker, voice recognition processor capable of detecting the customer's spoken words and microprocessor controller;
- 10          - prompting the customer to enter an order using spoken words;
- detecting the customer's spoken words in actual human speech;
- providing a video display viewable by the customer capable of displaying a photo-realistic image of a pizza according to the order specified by the customer, a graphical user interface permitting the customer to manually alter an order; and capable of displaying a menu of food items available for order;
- 15          - accepting confirmation of the accuracy of the customer's order;
- and entering the customer's order into the point-of-sale system.

17. A method for ordering food items, the method comprising the steps of:

- 5       - providing an order entry terminal for a customer to use to specify an order for one or more food items, the terminal being connected to a point-of-sale system and including a display screen, voice synthesis generator, microphone, speaker, voice recognition processor capable of detecting the customer's spoken words and microprocessor controller;
- 10      - prompting the customer to enter an order by speaking words in a normal human voice;
- 15      - identifying each food item ordered by the customer by detecting the customer's spoken words;
- displaying a photo-realistic image of each food item according to the order specified by the customer;
- displaying a graphical user interface to permit the customer to manually alter the order;
- confirming the accuracy of the customer's order; and
- entering the customer's order into the point-of-sale system.

18. An order entry terminal for use with an computerized point-of-sale order processing system for permitting a customer to order a pizza by designating the toppings to be assembled on a pizza as well as their respective position on the pizza, the order entry terminal comprising:

- 5       - a microprocessor based controller including a voice synthesis generator for presenting audible sounds in synthesized human speech;
- a touch screen video display;
- an audio speaker;
- 10      - a voice recognition processor connected to the controller;
- a microphone;
- a power supply; and
- a communication circuit for connecting the terminal to computerized point-of-sale order processing system;

15

whereby a user may define an order for a pizza by speaking in a normal human voice which is recognized by the terminal which in turn causes a visual image of the pizza detected as being ordered to be displayed to the customer toward the customer confirming and submitting the order into a point-of-sale system.